

MIKE KELLEY

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JOHN BOSKOVICH

JUNE 20 - JULY 18, 1992

RECEPTION: JUNE 20, 4-6

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**MIKE KELLEY**

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OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 5-7 PM  
NOVEMBER 14 - DECEMBER 19, 1992

April 9-April 29th, 1982

- Minneapolis College of Art and Design

✓ **Michael Kelly**

Drawings and Photographs

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## Visiting Artist's Exhibition

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✓ **John Miller**

Paintings

LIBRARY

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MUSEUM OF ART

- Opening: April 9th, 5-7pm

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Saturday 9-5, Sunday 12-5

✓ **JoAnn Verburg**

Photographs

Funding for this exhibition is made possible through a grant from the Dayton-Hudson Foundation



# MIKE KELLEY

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## *PANSY METAL*

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## *CLOVERED HOOF*

1989

Ten oversized silk scarves

Country Cousin  
Blood & Soil (Potato Print)  
Unlucky Clover  
Twisted Shamrock  
Master Dik

Satan's Nostrils  
Hangin'-Heavy-Hairy-Horny  
Emerald Eyehole  
Peat Spade  
The Orange & Green

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MIKE KELLEY

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# The Poetics Project: 1977–1997

Barcelona version

A Collaborative Project by

Mike Kelley and Tony Oursler

28 May through 31 July 1998

Opening Thursday 28 May 1998 5:00–7:00pm

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KELLY, MIKE

ARTIST'S FILE

# The Poetics Project: 1977-1997

Documenta version

A Collaborative Project by

Mike Kelley and Tony Oursler

28 May through 12 September 1998

Opening Thursday 28 May 1998 6:00-8:00pm

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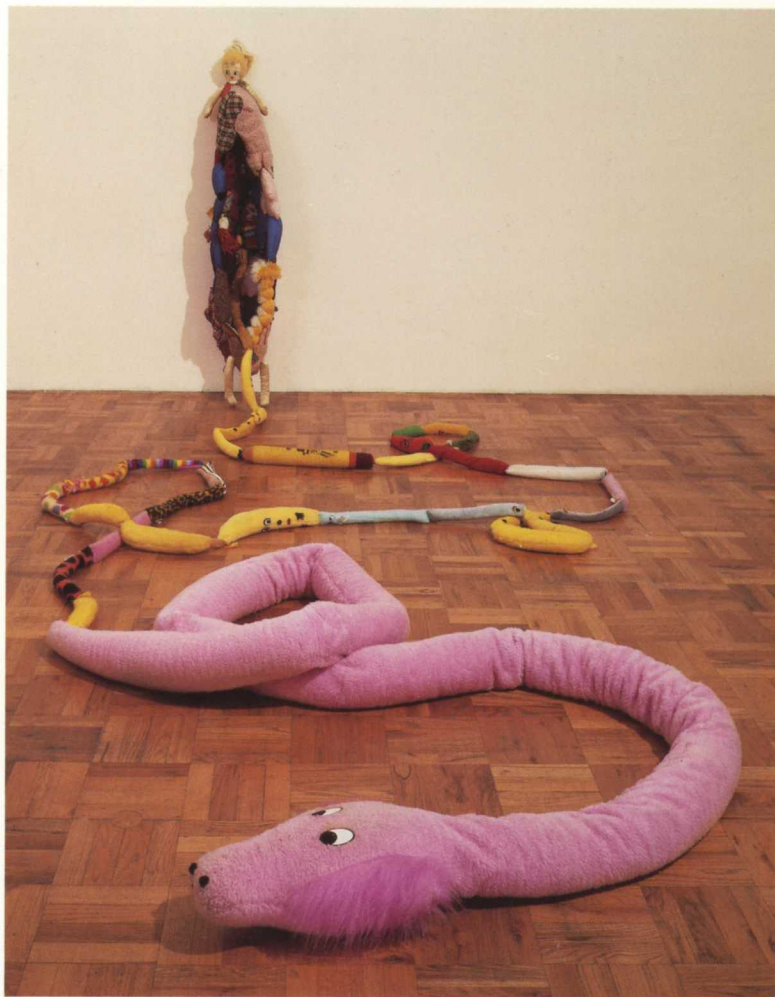
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DIRECTIONS

# MIKE KELLEY: "HALF A MAN"

FEBRUARY 20 - MAY 19, 1991



*Eviscerated Corpse*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 71½ x 99½ x 166 in. Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles.

**M**IKE KELLEY'S ART IS CONFRONTATIONAL. His particular fusion of high and low culture is heavily weighted toward the low. Inspired by such unexalted arts and crafts as felt religious banners, cartoons, hand-crocheted blankets, and stuffed toys, Kelley's work questions the sanctity of certain culturally hallowed myths.

Essentially conceptual, Kelley's art is project-oriented. He investigates a particular topic, such as the link between artistic creativity and criminality or the romantic notion of the sublime, and then, inspired by these studies, produces an assortment of work in varied media. Kelley combines paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, and banners to create installations. In the past, he has ended these projects with a performance in which many of the objects functioned as props. Kelley's last project-related performance, "Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile," was presented at Artists Space in New York in 1986, but his recent "presentations" or "readings," as he calls them, have not been directly related to specific projects. In his performances as well as installations, Kelley's stance is that of an adolescent—he ridicules authority by using taboo sexual and, at times, scatological imagery to question the validity of sacred myths.

In 1987 Kelley began the on-going project "Half A Man," which includes felt banners, black-and-white "symmetrical" paintings, "garbage" drawings, refined furniture, and stuffed animal objects. He has stated that these "works address . . . the issues of gender-specific imagery and the family."<sup>1</sup> In the stuffed animal works presented here, Kelley also confronts the rigid hierarchies of formalism and the myth of childhood innocence.

To create his bizarre tableaux, Kelley uses old, dirty toys—stuffed animals that he finds in second-hand stores. He sews or ties them together, then either carefully places them on baby blankets or hangs them on the wall or from the ceiling. These stuffed toys are elemental depictions of animals with a dose of cuteness added.

Early on, Kelley developed a flat cartoon-like style for his paintings and drawings. He is interested in that clearly legible technique because it allows him to communicate a variety of themes and is thus effective as "a carrier of information."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the stuffed animals allow him to express specific ideas. The toys, however, have another function in that, as found objects, their previous "lives" become an integral part of the work.



1. *Fruit of Thy Loins*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 39 x 21 x 12 in. Linda and Harry Macklowe Collection, New York.

Kelley's chosen toys are soiled and worn or particularly silly-looking animals, the sort of playthings fashioned by loving hands for a grandchild or a neighborhood church sale. Such toys can embody the sentimental ideas about childhood many adults hold dear. Kelley has stated that "the stuffed animal is a pseudo-child, a cutified sexless being which represents the adult's perfect model of a child—a neutered pet."<sup>3</sup> Kelley desecrates this model of perfection by re-presenting toys that have been discarded after years of service. With their stains or missing limbs, the embattled playthings thus undermine the adult notion of the purity of childhood.

The sexless nature of stuffed animals reflects the adult belief in the chastity of childhood. Far from innocent, childhood was characterized by Sigmund Freud as a time of sexual discovery. Freud locates the initial stirring of sexuality in the infant's suckling, an activity quickly transformed from hunger-satisfaction to pleasure-satisfaction. From that time, the child



evolves through ever-complex stages of sexual discovery of itself and others.

Kelley's much-fondled toys have an unmistakably sexual presence. The phallic snake form of *Plush Kundalini and Chakra Set*, 1987, refers to the Hindu "Kundalini, with its overtones of sexuality and power, [which] reinvests back into the dolls what has been left out."<sup>4</sup> The snake, a Freudian symbol as well, reappears in *Eviscerated Corpse*, 1989 [cover], which spills out over the floor from a wall-bound, vagina-like mass of stuffed animals. A related sculpture, *Fruit of Thy Loins*, 1990 [fig. 1], is a stuffed rabbit whose progenies emerge from its torso. Some of Kelley's animals are performers in hilarious sexual follies. In *Arena #8 (Leopard)*, 1990 [fig. 2], the spotted cat seems involved in a frustrating erotic activity. *Double Figure (Hairy)*, 1990, and *Double Figure (Polka Dot)*, 1990, depict more gymnastic maneuvers. In *Four Sock Dolls*, 1990, dolls hang upside down so that their skirts fall over their heads, exposing the stuffed socks that represent their "private parts." Curiously, the

upended dolls appear quite phallic. The element of low humor in these pieces is typical Kelley: the wicked, naughty laugh of the adolescent.

Nothing is sacred to Kelley. Religion and guilt are frequent motifs in his work, perhaps because he grew up in a Catholic family. *I Am*, 1989 [fig. 3], consists of two cushion-like craft items, with the words "The Way Is. I Am" stenciled on each, that engulf a crocheted bear head. "I Am" is a translation of Yahweh, a rendering of the Hebrew name of God from the Old Testament that was considered so sacred it could not be uttered. Through reforms initiated by the Second Vatican Council, in the 1960s the Roman Catholic church became more populist and began using the vernacular instead of Latin in the liturgy. The cushions reflect the spirit of those reforms. *I Am* is related to a series of felt banners Kelley created as part of the "Half A Man" project. These works were inspired by the brightly colored religious posters of a Catholic nun, Sister Mary Corita, which were popular in the 1960s.



2. *Arena #8 (Leopard)*, 1990. Stuffed toys, afghan; 12 x 65 x 43 in. Janelle Reiring. New York.



The messy, additive quality of Kelley's installations contradicts the orderly, reductive model of Minimalist sculpture. Inherent in Kelley's approach is a critique of formalism. The late critic Craig Owens described the modern period as a time when the authority of the work of art lay in the acceptance of the universality of its forms. These forms represented the dominant male, European-based vision. The contemporary postmodern period is characterized by an acceptance of a plurality of cultural visions, claiming no such universal authority. Postmodern art, in fact, aggressively refutes these claims of authority.<sup>5</sup>

By using hand-sewn and crocheted dolls and blankets, traditionally considered "women's work," Kelley borrows a feminist strategy of presenting crafts as art to confront the hierarchies of modernism. In a recent article, he examines the gender attributes of hard (male) and soft (female) forms and lists Salvador Dali, Claes Oldenburg, and Peter Saul as examples of "male artists using supposedly feminine softness so as to attack and destabilize the hard patriarchal order."<sup>6</sup> He also points to such women artists as Sherrie Levine who use hard, geometric modes to criticize this same male order. "What it boils down to is a kind of artistic gender-bending."<sup>7</sup> This gender-bending is obvious in the five-work series entitled "Manly Craft" from 1989. The two handmade yarn dolls—twisted, tied, and hung upside-down—that make up each work could be strange fetishes, but they are decidedly not "manly." The very idea of a man sewing and manipulating old dolls to make art contradicts the heroic modernist image of the male artist using industrial materials to fabricate imposing sculptures. The irony of the "Manly Craft" works is that they resemble male genitals.

Kelley actually considers his stuffed animal works more formalist than his other efforts because he emphasizes the formal properties—color, composition, structure—of each. He has described the process of arranging the different elements as being similar to painting because it involves moving around areas of color.<sup>8</sup> In *Double Figure (Equal Weight Orange)*, 1990, the title describes a specific compositional detail. Other works refer to modern painting styles. *Arena #3 (Green Circle)*, 1990, a tablecloth populated by two big-eyed bugs (or bug heads), could be a generic biomorphic surrealist picture by, for example, Joan Miró. *Arena #4 (Zen Garden)*, 1990, a crocheted afghan thrown over presumably frightened stuffed animals, looks not only like a meticulously raked Japanese pebble garden but a standard color-field painting.

The serial nature of much Minimalist sculpture is alluded to in such works as *Four Yarn Figures*, 1990, and *Four Wire Sculptures*, 1990. What subverts their being merely formalist works is their unorthodox materials.

A preoccupation with the body and its functions is apparent in Kelley's art. He has depicted and evoked images of body parts, entrails, feces, organs, and bodily fluids as a strategy of social critique. Kelley has traced the political uses of anal and fecal imagery to Greek comedies and the political cartoons of the French Neoclassical painter Jacques-Louis David.<sup>9</sup> This marriage of taboo materials and caricature to ridicule authority parallels Kelley's use of pathetic-looking stuffed animals to challenge the tenets of Minimalism.

This focus on the body as a political arena is reminiscent of the early performance work of Vito Acconci and Chris Burden, both of whom have also used aggressive imagery offensive to conventional mores. Other, contemporary manifestations of this strategy are the photography-based work of Cindy Sherman and the performances of Karen Finley. Bruce Nauman's early Process works, in which traces of his or others' bodies are left in soft materials to make sculpture, as well as his overall intermedia approach are another influence. These artists also share the use of shock value to varying degrees in their art.

Inherently anarchic and tenaciously iconoclastic, Kelley revels in exposing the absurdities and inconsistencies of certain commonly held belief systems. Made of banal or even ridiculous materials and images, Kelley's very humorous works gradually reveal their biting edge.

Amada Cruz  
Assistant Curator

1. Mike Kelley, "Three Projects by Mike Kelley at the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago," *White Walls* 20 (Fall 1988): 9.

2. Kelley, in Paul Taylor, "Mike Kelley: Toying with Second-Hand Souvenirs" (interview), *Flash Art*, no. 154 (October 1990): 142.

3. Kelley, "Three Projects," 9.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

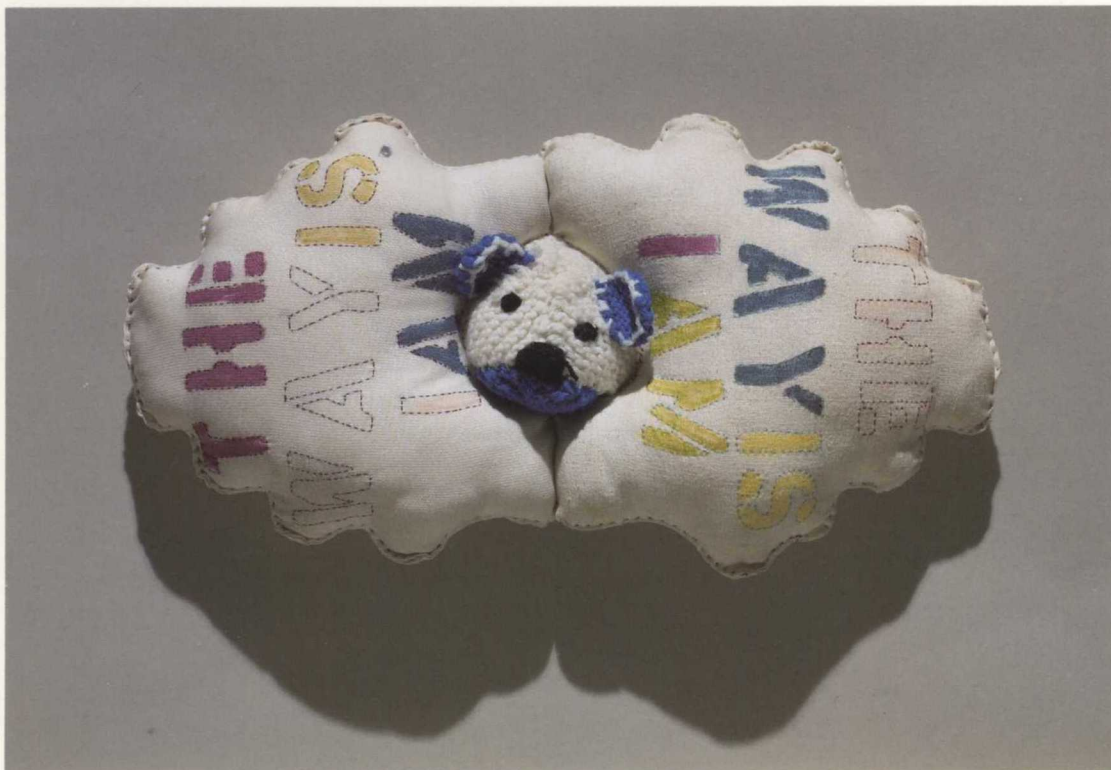
5. Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983), pp. 57–58.

6. Kelley, "Foul Perfection: Thoughts on Caricature," *Artforum* 27 (January 1989): 98.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Based on a February 1990 conversation with the artist.

9. Kelley, "Foul Perfection," 95.



3. *I Am*, 1989. Craft items, stuffed toy; 10 x 20 x 3¼ in. Private collection, Los Angeles.



## BIOGRAPHY

Born in Detroit, Michigan, October 27, 1954. Educated at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, B. F. A., 1976; California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, M. F. A., 1978. Awards include: Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, 1983; Visual Artists Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts, 1985; Awards in the Visual Arts, 1987-88. Lives and works in Los Angeles.

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1981 Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles.
- 1982 Metro Pictures, New York (also 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990).
- 1983 Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles (also 1984, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1990).
- 1988 The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.
- 1989 Jablonka Galerie, Cologne; Galerie Peter Pakesch, Vienna; Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago.
- 1990 Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris.

## SELECTED PERFORMANCES

- 1978 Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, *Poetry in Motion; Indiana; La Jolla (California) Museum of Contemporary Art, My Space.*
- 1979 Foundation for Arts Resources, Los Angeles, *My Space; The Big Tent; The Monitor and the Merrimac.*
- 1980 Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions and the Kitchen, New York, *The Parasite Lily.*
- 1981 Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, *Meditation on a Can of Vernors.*
- 1982 University of California, Los Angeles, *The Artist in Television*, New York/Los Angeles teletext conference with Michael Smith.
- 1983 Pilot Theater, Los Angeles, *Confusion: A Play in Seven Sets, Each Set More Spectacular and Elaborate Than the Last; Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center, Venice, California, Monkey Island; X-C (collaboration).*
- 1984 The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, *The Sublime; Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center, Venice, California, Godzilla on the Beach (collaboration).*
- 1986 Artists Space, New York, *Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile.*
- 1989 929 E. 2nd Street, Los Angeles, *Pansy Metal/Clovered Hoof (collaboration).*

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cotter, Holland. "Eight Artists Interviewed." *Art in America* 75 (May 1987): 162-79, 197, 199.
- Kelley, Mike. "Ajax." *Journal (L.A.I.C.A.)* 4 (Spring 1984): 28-31.
- . "Foul Perfection: Thoughts on Caricature." *Artforum* 27 (January 1989): 92-99.
- . Statement in *White Walls* 13 (Spring 1986): 40-41.
- . "Three Projects by Mike Kelley at the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago." *White Walls* 20 (Fall 1988): 8-12.
- Knight, Christopher. "Disheveled Dolls Center of Mike Kelley's Show." *Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 1990, Calendar p. F4.
- Mike Kelley: *Three Projects*. Exhibition catalog. Chicago: Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, 1988. Essays by John Miller and Howard Singerman.
- Smith, Roberta. "Mike Kelley." *New York Times*, April 20, 1990, p. C28.
- Sussman, Elisabeth, and David Joselit. "Mike Kelley." In Trevor Fairbrother, et al., *The BiNational: American Art of the Late 80s*. Exhibition catalog. Boston: Institute for Contemporary Art and Museum of Fine Arts; Cologne: DuMont, 1988. Interview.

## CHECKLIST

- Plush Kundalini and Chakra Set*, 1987. Stuffed toys, fabric; 264 x 24 x 24 in. Private collection, New York.
- Estral Star 1*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 31½ x 12 x 6 in. Mr. and Mrs. Melvyn J. Estrin, courtesy Thea Westreich Associates, New York.
- Estral Star 2*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 22 x 15 x 4½ in. Private collection, New York.
- Estral Star 3*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 23 x 10½ x 5 in. Rosamund Felsen, Los Angeles.
- E.T.'s Long Neck, Two Brains, Penis and Scrotum*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 144 x 6 in. Private collection, Vienna, Austria.
- Eviscerated Corpse*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 71½ x 99½ x 166 in. Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles.
- Frankenstein*, 1989. Stuffed toys, basket with spools of thread, pincushion, felt; 12½ x 78 x 28 in. Judy and Stuart Spence, South Pasadena, California.
- I Am*, 1989. Craft items, stuffed toy; 10 x 20 x 3¼ in. Private collection, Los Angeles.
- Manly Craft #1*, 1989. Yarn toys; 22 x 9 x 5¼ in. Collection Metro Pictures, New York.
- Manly Craft #2*, 1989. Yarn toys; 14 x 6½ x 3½ in. Roger Merians and Suzanne Felsen, Topanga, California.
- Manly Craft #3*, 1989. Yarn toys; 25 x 10 x 5 in. Christopher Wool, New York.
- Manly Craft #4*, 1989. Yarn toys; 15¼ x 9 x 4 in. Private collection, courtesy Thea Westreich Associates, New York.

- Manly Craft #5*, 1989. Yarn toys; 25 x 8 x 4 in. Private collection, Boston.
- Number One and Number Two*, 1989. Stuffed toys; 32 x 16 x 8¼ in. Private collection.
- Sack Mates*, 1989. Stuffed toys, sock; 21 x 8 x 5 in. Private collection.
- Arena #3 (Green Circle)*, 1990. Stuffed toys, tablecloth; 4 x 80 x 65 in. Private collection.
- Arena #4 (Zen Garden)*, 1990. Stuffed toys, afghans; 9 x 53 x 67 in. Private collection, Germany.
- Arena #5 (E.T.S.)*, 1990. Stuffed toys, blanket; 7 x 97 x 87 in. Courtesy Thomas Ammann, Zurich.
- Arena #8 (Leopard)*, 1990. Stuffed toys, afghan; 12 x 65 x 43 in. Janelle Reiring, New York.
- Arena #11 (Book Bunny)*, 1990. Stuffed toy, book, cans of insect killer, blanket; 9¼ x 76 x 56 in. F. Roos Collection.
- Double Figure (Equal Weight Orange)*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 21 x 21½ x 11 in. Private collection.
- Double Figure (Hairy)*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 26 x 15 x 7 in. Mark Rosenthal and Lisa Roumell, courtesy Thea Westreich Associates, New York.
- Double Figure (Polka Dot)*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 17½ x 13½ x 13 in. Courtesy Thomas Ammann, Zurich.
- Double Flaccid Cat*, 1990. Yarn toys, mixed media; 30 x 12 x 6½ in. Michel Auder and Cindy Sherman, New York.
- Double Worm (One French)*, 1990. Yarn toys, mixed media; 50 x 6 x 3 in. Private collection, Los Angeles.
- Four Sock Dolls*, 1990. Stuffed toys, fabric; four parts, dimensions variable. Collection Metro Pictures, New York.
- Four Wire Sculptures*, 1990. Yarn toys; four parts, dimensions variable. Blake Byrne, Los Angeles.
- Four Yarn Figures*, 1990. Yarn toys; 15 x 15 x 15 in. Karavias, Rye, New York.
- Fruit of Thy Loins*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 39 x 21 x 12 in. Linda and Harry Macklowe Collection, New York.
- Short Worm, Long Cat*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 47 x 4 x 3 in. Clyde and Karen Beswick, Los Angeles.
- Three-Part Yarn Set*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 20 x 11 x 7 in. Richard and Lois Plehn, New York.
- Transplant*, 1990. Stuffed toys, afghans; 135 x 30 in. Thomas Borgmann.
- Turtle/Girl*, 1990. Stuffed toys; 23½ x 14½ x 7 in. Bette Ziegler, New York.



HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND  
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# MIKE KELLEY

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## OBRAS RECIENTES

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5 NOV. - 1991

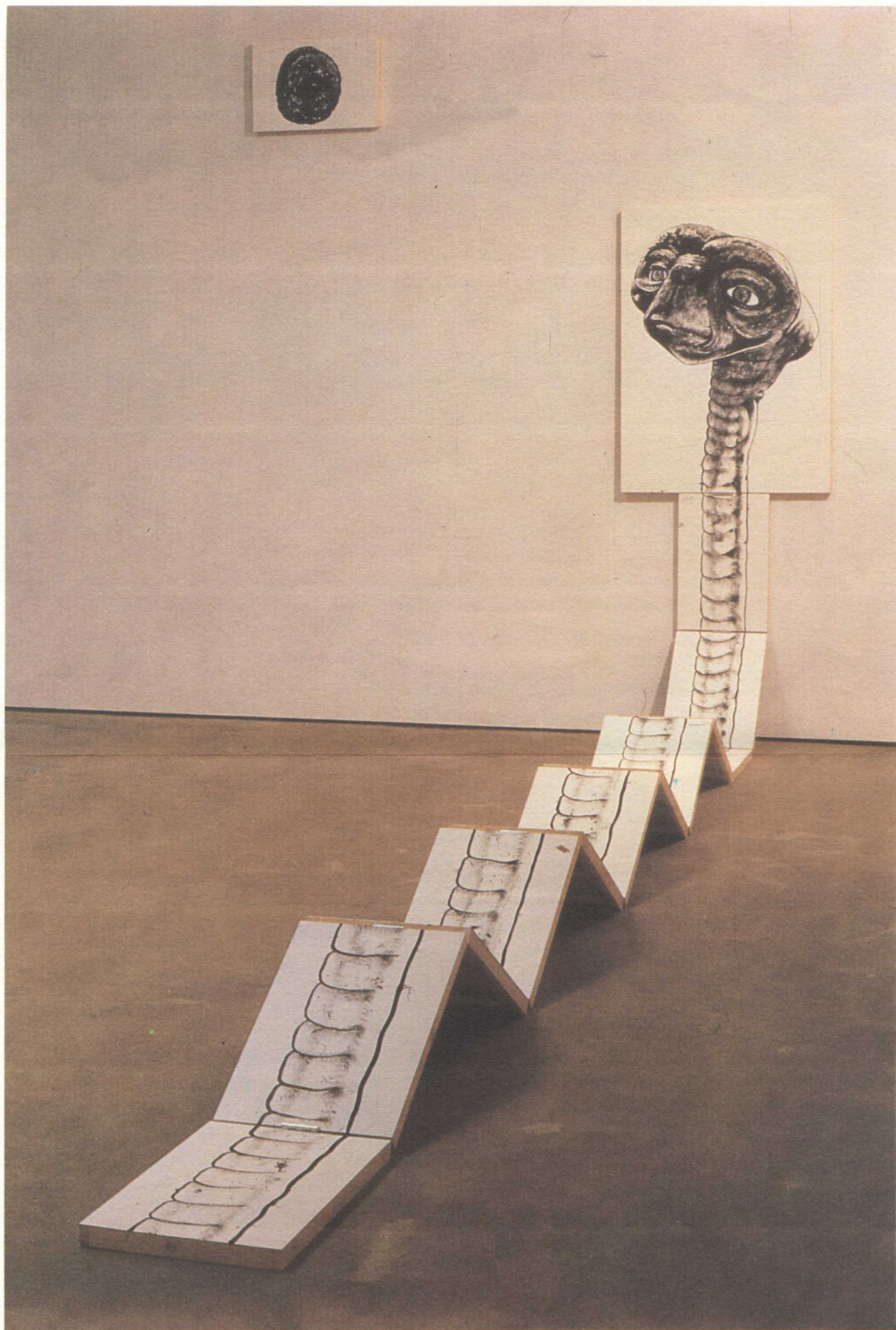
8 TARDE

MADRID, BARQUILLO, 44

galería juana de aizpuru

SEVILLA/MADRID





HOMESICK (PERSONIFIED LUMP AND ITS PURE STATE) 1991  
1 PIEZA DE 38 x 58 cm.  
13 PIEZAS, TOTAL 89 x 50 x 230 cm.  
ACRILICO SOBRE PAPEL MONTADO EN PANELES DE MADERA

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&  
PROUD  
P.S.  
JERK-  
OFF  
TOO**

**(AND I WEAR GLASSES)**

# MIKE KELLEY

## CUT FELT BANNERS

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Mike Kelley  
Toyama Statement  
Page Two

MIKE KELLEY - STATEMENT FOR 1987 TOYAMA EXHIBITION

The works I have chosen for the "Toyama Now '87" exhibition all spring from my interest in the Japanese mythological water creature, the Kappa. I stumbled across the folk tales describing this being four years ago and I was immediately struck by the oddness of them. More than anything they reminded me of case studies of sex crimes but, even more riveting, was the strange familiarity of them. The perversions acted out in them are almost Freudian cliches. The Kappa's head bowl ringed with hair, its fixation with the anus, and its association with the cucumber are sexually blatant to the point of ridiculousness. This familiarity also seemed unusual when many Japanese folk tales, and even popular culture, are alien to American sensibilities. The Kappa stories somehow bridge the gap between the East/West split, the sexual symbols in them are a point of agreement between the two cultures.

My interest in the Kappa resulted in the production of a videotape done in collaboration with the Japanese/American artists, the brothers Bruce and Norman Yonemoto. In this tape we decided to merge the classic Western myth of Oedipus with the Eastern Kappa myths with a Freudian interpretation being the point of contact. I portrayed the Kappa in the tape and the wig presented in the Toyama exhibition is one I designed for and wore in it.

At the time of my discovery of the Kappa stories I didn't know that the character was still familiar in Japan. I was later told that the sprite is still a very common image though the examples I've seen of its modern form are quite lacking in the evil qualities present in the old tales. To say that the Kappa has been cleaned up would be an understatement, the Kappa has in fact become a cartoon character sweetened in the Disney manner. The city symbol of Tokyo is one of these "cute" modern Kappas.



Mike Kelley  
Toyama Statement  
Page Two

The paintings done for the show all present cleaned up sexually loaded images drawn from Japanese popular sources and all revolve around wetness. One painting concerns the enormous enlargement of the teary pupils of the eyes in girl's comics. Another painting represents the "blank spot" substituting the area of genital contact in depictions of copulating couples in men's comics. This blank area is often haloed and the sexual activity is made obvious by the fact that a large amount of liquid is shown emanating from the spot. The largest painting is of a cucumber with my name written on it. According to the stories I've read, if you toss the Kappa's favorite vegetable with your personal signature on it into his pond he will refrain from playing nasty pranks on you.

I extend this pond gift to all the other artists who live around the "Pacific Rim". We are all joined by our connection to this body of water and I hope this communion through wetness is a pleasurable one.

At the time of my discovery of the Kappa stories I didn't know that the character was so familiar in Japan. I was later told that the spruce is a very common image though the examples I've seen of it are from the 1950s. Lacking in the evil qualities present in the old tales, to say that the Kappa has been cleaned up would be an understatement. The Kappa has in fact become a cartoon character, portrayed in the Disney manner. The city symbol of Tokyo is one of these "cute" modern Kappas.



# Art/Kay Larson VALLEY OF THE DOLLS

“...Mike Kelley's is the story of childhood and its discontents, spent among people with lots of rules and no imagination. . .”

A CRAZY PILE OF EMOTIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS, sexual double entendres, and closeted rage peeks out from under various kinds of blankets in **Mike Kelley's** show at the Whitney. The pile is not intellectual, and it can't be understood in the ways common to retrospectives. Instead, it's the refuse from a psychodrama. The protagonist is Kelley himself, projecting his morbid, angry, working-class Catholic adolescent persona onto everything he touches. Therein lies a revelation about class, art, and culture in America. You may not like it or agree with it. But artists often say things nobody wants to hear. The challenge to us in the audience—we who are forced to play the role of judgmental adults to Kelley's rebellious teenager—is to separate out our own feelings, to be careful about being provoked, and to look for the emotional truth in the mixed messages.

Start at the simplest level. Kelley is best known for the worn, dirty stuffed animals he picks out of thrift-store bins. He can cite the modernist tradition of the found object, but that's just a surface gloss on his real purposes. In truth, he uses the animals as a child would, by giving them roles in the psychodrama. At various spots in the Whitney, a plush bunny or a mangled bear sits in lonely isolation on a cheap blanket stretched over the floor. The blanket is as vast as the sea, and the little fella floats in a universe of indifference, sometimes subjected to a lecture from a nearby tape player. Sounds exactly like puberty, right? And what does it matter that the blanket's flatness hints at the infinite space in a Pollock painting? To turn Pollock into corn pone—or Fellini's *La Strada* into *The Beverly Hillbillies*—is the drift of culture right now. The pull of the lowest common denominator is irresistible.

America began enshrining youth culture with the baby-boomers. By now, the eternally pubescent body is fixed in our minds as the norm. Despite the sexy sell of advertising, I remember adolescence as

a desperately unhappy, anti-social, deliberately perverse moment. So by lowering the cultural age level of the entertainment industry, America has left the door wide open for the likes of *Beavis and Butt-head*, parading their young-male fixations, scatological, cruel, unspeakable, and stupid. What else is possible when the 10-year-olds are the target audience?

It helps that this is very much a mid-career retrospective. Kelley, at 39, has

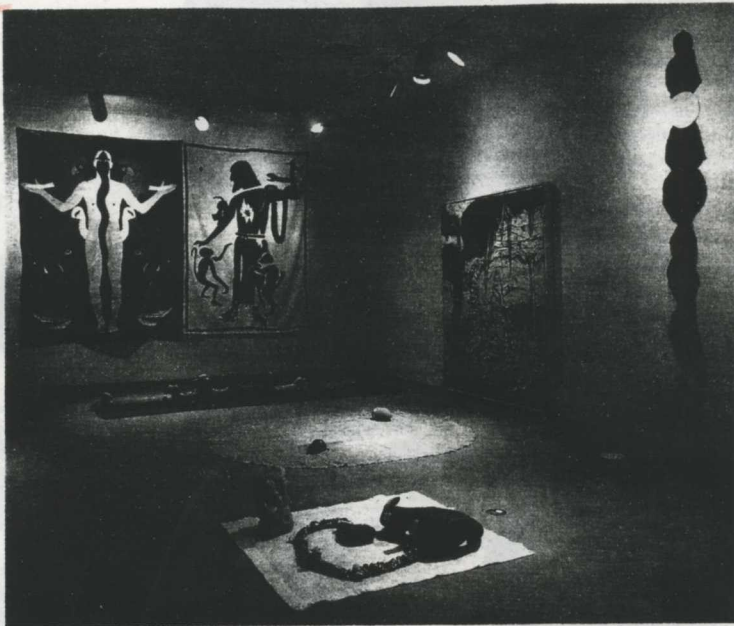
vided by the labels (written by artist and critic Tim Martin), the scatter methods refer to the random distribution of materials favored by sixties Process artists such as Barry Le Va. Well, yes, but the emotional message says “sex under a blanket.” It also speaks of childhood innocence (the cute little critters) being smothered by a colossal knitted cozy. Kelley's art never leaves either theme for long.

Kelley grew up in Michigan. He painted at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and played in a lumpen-rock band—a classic young-male escape route. When he switched to the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, his work took on a characteristic intellectual gloss. Cal Arts had a strong bias toward theory. Many of Kelley's themes originated in his performances, which offered him the chance to act out, in several senses of the word. The metaphors have become embedded in Kelley's art. He needs those labels to decode the work for the audience.

On the other hand, Kelley is important in the international circuit because he rejects the cool theorizing of the Cal Arts style. Ditching decades of formalism,

he has heated up the emotional temperature by enlisting the aesthetics, and the material fetishes, of the prole class: the cheap veneer furniture, the *Ladies' Home Journal* crafts, the polyester doll clothes, the frayed blankets, the furry animals soiled by displaced affection. The story is childhood and its discontents, spent among people with lots of rules and no imagination. Kelley's tactic, also used by a number of post-baby-boom artists, is to enlist objects that come with ready-made emotional price tags. In theory, his work should speak to the class it comes from. Yet Kelley's concerned with the impossibility of communication and the failure of love. So he's hung up on a contradiction.

The best work, most of it recent, resolves this discord between theory and emotion via the artist's classic method:



**BLANKET STATEMENTS:** The Kelley show at the Whitney.

been plucked out of his usual milieu—the downtown galleries and the international installation scene—by curator Elisabeth Sussman. Once again, the Whitney does a show that would make more sense (and would feel more sympathetic) in an alternative space. Some of the wrenching noise you hear is Kelley being forced to go uptown. Actually, if you separate his youthful work from the recent stuff, the “mature” work (an oxymoronic idea if there ever was one) is better and clearer.

Consider the vast knitted afghan, constructed by the Fabric Workshop in Philadelphia, that covers the floor of one room. It's thrown over a random scattering of stuffed animals whose invisible bodies leave mountainous lumps in the piney green and brown chevrons, like a soft map by Claes Oldenburg. If you believe the rationale pro-



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making something you've never seen before, something totally surprising. The afghan is striking. So are his signature works, the stuffed animals sewn into sculptures and wall hangings that are black holes of pathos, sucking in every feeling in the vicinity, from vulnerability to rage. A wall of drawings, as you get off the elevator, is like an index to his art. Kelley projected "Sad Sack" comics onto paper, ignored the people, and drew the garbage. Like the clouds in Rococo paintings, little puffs of refuse soar across the wall, proclaiming the landscapes of the twenty-first century.

But too much here feels too undigested, too unnecessarily complicated. For instance, the show has a female side and a male one. In the rear hang the motherly "love objects," the stuffed animals, the felt banners that refer to their Catholic counterparts (and Sister Mary Corita's abstract exhortations to love and peace in the sixties). The male half, closer to the elevator, is obsessed with excrement and exaltation. In this section, Kelley does a long riff on Edmund Burke's *Sublime*, like a student design project about the great philosophers. There is an "orgone box" with crumpled paper towels, and the paraphernalia of Dad's shop.

Between the two sections runs a corridor of portraits: Artists, poets, and revolutionaries profess their right to court madness and murder. It's a powerful line-up of great names, from Keats to Foucault. But as usual, Kelley states a position only to undercut it. A pair of collection boxes for victims' organizations stands at one end of the alley; at the other is a real murderer's very conventional-looking self-portrait. To imagine is divine; to act is banal. Which side is Kelley really on?

Kelley is caught, once again, in a contradiction. Banality is proletarian; you can't turn it into the *Sublime* just by an act of will. Consider the pink dresser in one of the back galleries. It's been antiqued with gloppy paint in a heartrending attempt to prettify something that will always be ugly. The decorator assumes that people will stop at surfaces. On the dresser's top, Kelley has glued pictures of himself. But if you walk to the back, where a mirror sits on the floor, you can see, stuck to the underside, a packet of birth-control pills, a diary, and a pair of sex books.

Kelley is at least trying to transform this experience into art. The energy expended on the struggle is obvious. His affinity with his generation will probably be clearer with time. But what does the future hold, for him and for his peers? Like rock stars, can they really transport adolescence into old age? Can America survive as a ward full of fixated teenage geriatrics? These questions are larger than Kelley himself, and so are the answers. (945 Madison Avenue, at 75th Street; through February 20, 1994.)

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### MIKE KELLEY

#### BIOGRAPHY

- 1954 Born Detroit, Michigan  
1976 BFA, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
1978 MFA, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA

Lives in Los Angeles

#### ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

- 1981 Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles.  
1982 Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
1983 Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
Hall Walls, Buffalo, NY.  
1984 Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
1985 Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
1986 Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
1987 "Vintage Works: 1979-1986," Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
1988 The Renaissance Society, Chicago, IL.  
Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
1989 Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
Jablonka Galerie, Cologne, W. Germany.  
Galerie Peter Pakesch, Vienna, Austria.  
Jablonka Galerie, Cologne, W. Germany.  
"Pansy Metal/Clovered Hoof," Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
"Pansy Metal/Clovered Hoof," Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago.  
1990 Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
Pacific Film Archive, University Art Museum, University of California,  
Berkeley.  
Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
Ghislaine Hussenot Galerie, Paris.

KELLY, MIKE

## One-Artist Exhibitions (continued)

(Upcoming)

- 1991 Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C. Curated by Amada Cruz;  
April.  
I.C.A. Boston, ten year survey, to travel.  
October.
- 1980 "By-Products," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles.  
Group Exhibition, Anna Nosen Gallery, New York, NY.
- 1981 "Contemporary Drawings," University Art Museum, University of  
California, Santa Barbara (catalogue).  
"Beware of the Dog," Mudd Club, New York, NY.  
Group Exhibition, White Columns, New York, NY.  
Group Exhibition, Newspace, Los Angeles.  
"Exhibition," California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA (catalogue).  
Group Exhibition, Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles.
- 1982 "5 From L.A.," University of California, San Diego.  
"John Miller, Michael Kelley, JoAnn Verburg," Minneapolis College of  
Art & Design, Minneapolis, MN.
- 1983 "Summer Show," Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
"Head Hunters," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles  
(catalogue).  
"Wordworks," Minneapolis College of Art & Design & Walker Art  
Center, Minneapolis, MN.  
Group Exhibition, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA.  
"The First Show," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
(catalogue).  
"Sunday in Feb," L.A.C.E., Los Angeles.  
"Art on Paper," Weatherspoon Gallery, University of North Carolina at  
Greensboro.  
Hallwalls, Buffalo, New York.
- 1984 "The Fifth Biennale of Sydney - Private Symbol: Social Metaphor," The  
Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (catalogue).  
"Performance On/And Video," Hall Walls, Buffalo, NY.  
"Video Pool," Winnipeg, Canada.  
"Contemporary Eccentrics," Edge Gallery, Fullerton, CA.  
Group Exhibition, Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
Group Exhibition, Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
"The First Biennial 1984: Los Angeles Today," Newport Harbor Art  
Museum, Newport Beach, CA (catalogue).
- 1985 "Mike Kelley and John Miller," Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
"1985 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of American Art, New  
York, NY (catalogue).



## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1979 "Manifesto Show," 5 Bleeker Street, New York, NY.  
"The Poltergeist," Foundation for Art Resources, Los Angeles,  
collaboration with David Askevold.  
"Sound," Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art & Institute for  
Art and Urban Resources, P.S. 1, New York, NY (catalogue).
- 1980 "By-Products," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles.  
Group Exhibition, Anina Nosei Gallery, New York, NY.
- 1981 "Contemporary Drawings," University Art Museum, University of  
California, Santa Barbara (catalogue).  
"Beware of the Dog," Mudd Club, New York, NY.  
Group Exhibition, White Columns, New York, NY.  
Group Exhibition, Newspace, Los Angeles.  
"Exhibition," California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA (catalogue).  
Group Exhibition, Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles.
- 1982 "5 From L.A.," University of California, San Diego.  
"John Miller, Michael Kelley, JoAnn Verburg," Minneapolis College of  
Art & Design, Minneapolis, MN.
- 1983 "Summer Show," Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
"Head Hunters," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles  
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"Wordworks," Minneapolis College of Art & Design & Walker Art  
Center, Minneapolis, MN.  
Group Exhibition, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA.  
"The First Show," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
(catalogue).  
"Sunday in Fiji," L.A.C.E., Los Angeles.  
"Art on Paper," Weatherspoon Gallery, University of North Carolina at  
Greensboro.  
Hallwalls, Buffalo, New York.
- 1984 "The Fifth Biennale of Sydney - Private Symbol: Social Metaphor," The  
Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (catalogue).  
"Performance On/And Video," Hall Walls, Buffalo, NY.  
"Video Pool," Winnipeg, Canada.  
"Contemporary Eccentrics," Edge Gallery, Fullerton, CA.  
Group Exhibition, Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.  
Group Exhibition, Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
"The First Biennial 1984: Los Angeles Today," Newport Harbor Art  
Museum, Newport Beach, CA (catalogue).
- 1985 "Mike Kelley and John Miller," Metro Pictures, New York, NY.  
"1985 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of American Art, New  
York, NY (catalogue).



## GROUP EXHIBITIONS con't

- "Signal Approach," The Funnel, Toronto, Canada (catalogue).  
"Art in the Anchorage," The Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage,  
New York, NY, sponsored by Creative Time.  
"Best of the West," Zero One Gallery, Los Angeles  
"B&W," Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
(curator).  
"Funny Art," Concord Gallery, New York, NY.  
"Currents-7: Words in Action," Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee,  
WI.  
"Auto/Genetic/Photopsia," Christminster Gallery, New York, NY.  
1986 "Natural Settings," Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.  
Group Exhibition, Baskerville & Watson Gallery, New York, NY  
(collaboration with Bruce & Norman Yonemoto.)  
"The Fairy Tale: Politics, Desire, and Everyday Life," Artists Space, New  
York, NY (collaboration with Bruce and Norman Yonemoto).  
"Baaa Baaa Ba' bel," The Alexandria Hotel, Los Angeles.  
"Poetic Resemblance," Hall Walls, Buffalo, New York, NY &  
Loughelton Gallery, New York, NY (catalogue).  
"Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch...," Kuhlenschmidt/Simon Gallery,  
Los Angeles.  
Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945-1986,"  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (catalogue).  
"A New Abstraction," New City, Venice, CA.  
1987 "Schema," Baskerville & Watson Gallery, New York, NY.  
Group Exhibition, Saxon-Lee Gallery, Los Angeles (collaboration with  
Bruce & Norman Yonemoto).  
"Avant-Garde in the Eighties," Los Angeles County Museum of Art,  
Los Angeles (catalogue).  
1989 "1987 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of American Art, New  
York, NY (collaboration with Bruce & Norman Yonemoto)  
(catalogue).  
"Toyama Now '87," Museum of Modern Art, Toyama, Japan (catalogue).  
"Cal Arts; Skeptical Belief(s)," The Renaissance Society at the  
University of Chicago, IL & Newport Harbor Art Museum,  
Newport Beach, CA (catalogue).  
"1987 Phoenix Biennial," Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ.  
"Contemporary Diptychs: Divided Visions," Whitney Museum of  
American Art, New York, NY.  
"Head Sex," Feature, Chicago, IL.  
"Nothing Sacred," Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles.  
"L.A. Hot and Cool," M.I.T. List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA  
(catalogue).  
1988 "Striking Distance," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Triton



## GROUP EXHIBITIONS con't

- Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA; Fresno Arts Center & Museum, Fresno, CA; University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA.
- "Awards in the Visual Arts 7," Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Carnegie-Mellon University Art Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA (catalogue).
- "Recent Drawings," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.
- "Monster with Three Heads," Don Soker Contemporary Art, San Francisco, CA.
- 1990 "43rd Biennale of Venice, Aperto '88," Venice, Italy (catalogue).
- "Lost and Found in California: Four Decades of Assemblage Art," James Corcoran Gallery, Santa Monica, CA; Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Santa Monica, CA; Pence Gallery, Santa Monica, CA (catalogue).
- "Graz 1988," Grazer Kunstverein, Stadtmuseum Graz, Austria (catalogue).
- "Binational: Art of the Late Eighties," Museum of Fine Arts & The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Städtische Kunsthalle, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf, W. Germany; Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, W. Germany; Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart, W. Germany. (catalogue).
- "New Works on Paper," Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.
- "Democracy," Dia Art Foundation, New York, NY, organized by Group Material.
- "Art Against Aids," Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles.
- Metro Pictures, New York.
- 1989 "A Forest of Signs: Art in the Crisis of Representation," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (catalogue).
- "1989 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (catalogue).
- "What is Contemporary Art?," Rooseum, Malmö, Sweden (catalogue).
- "Prospect 89," Frankfurter Kunstverein, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany (catalogue).
- 1991 "A Decade of American Drawing 1980-1989," Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles.
- "Mike Kelley, Judy Pfaff, Keith Sonnier," Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Birmingham, MI.
- Jennifer Bolande, Tim Ebner, Mike Kelley, Ken Lum," Robbin Lockett Gallery, Chicago, IL.
- "They See god," Pat Hearn Gallery, New York.
- Metro Pictures, New York.



## GROUP EXHIBITIONS con't

### PERFORMANCES

- "The Images of American Pop Culture Today III," organized by U.S.S.O. Co. Ltd. for La Foret Art Museum, Tokyo.
- 1978 "Filling in the Gap," Feigen & Co., Chicago.
- "Künstlerische Fotografie der 70er and 80er Jahre," Galerie Schurr, Stuttgart.
- "Erotophobia," Simon Watson, New York.
- "No Stomach," Installation, San Diego, CA.
- "Jessica Diamond, Allen Ruppersberg, Mike Kelley," Christine Burgin Gallery, New York.
- 1979 "The Images of American Pop Culture Today III," organized by U.S.S.O. Co. Ltd. for La Foret Art Museum, Tokyo.
- 1990 "Past & Present - Selected Works by Gallery Artists," Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.
- "Stained Sheets/Holy Shroud," Krygier/Landau Contemporary Art, Santa Monica, CA, curated by David Humphrey (catalogue).
- 1980 "The Thing Itself," Feature, New York, NY.
- "Prints and Multiples," Luhring, Augustine, Hetzler, Los Angeles.
- "Drawings: Werner Buttner, Mike Kelley, Martin Kippenberger, Robert Longo, John Miller," Metro Pictures, New York.
- "Jessica Diamond, Mike Kelley," Interim Art, London
- "Editionen," Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne
- "Mike Kelley, Tim Rollins + K.O.S., Meyer Vaisman," Jay Gorney Modern Art, New York.
- 1981 "Re: Framing Cartoons," Loughelton Gallery, New York.
- "The Children's Aids Project," Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles.
- 1982 "Le Desenchantement Du Monde," Villa Arson, Nice, France (catalogue).
- "Figuring the Body," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
- "The Kitchen Art Benefit," Leo Castelli/Castelli Graphics and Curt Marcus Gallery, New York.
- "Just Pathetic," Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles, curated by Ralph Rugoff, (catalogue).
- 1983 "Heart and Mouth," Fahey/Klein Gallery, Los Angeles.
- "Total Metal," Simon Watson, New York.
- "Spirit of Our Time," Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara, CA.

### Scheduled Upcoming Group Exhibitions:

- 1991 Fundacion Caja de Pensiones, Madrid. Curated by Dan Cameron; January.
- "Metropolis," Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin. Curated by Norman Rosenthal and Christos Joachimidis; April.
- 1985 "Monkey Island Part Two," Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery Theater, part of "Artificial Intelligence in the Art, #1 Brainworks," a symposium in conjunction with the exhibition "Los Angeles Summer/Styrian Autumn," Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.



PERFORMANCES cont

PERFORMANCES

- 1978 "Poetry in Motion," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles.  
 "Dream Lover," audio tape; The Poetics, C.L.O.S.E. Radio Art Series, KPFFK, Los Angeles (Mike Kelley, Tony Oursler, Don Krieger).
- 1989 "Indianana," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles.  
 "My Space," La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, CA.  
 "A Big Question," California State University, Los Angeles.
- 1979 "The Monitor and the Merrimac," Foundation for Art Resources, Los Angeles, in conjunction with the collaborative exhibition with David Askevold: "The Poltergeist".  
 Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, in conjunction with the exhibition "Sound" (catalogue).
- 1981-3 "Three Valleys," Foundation for Art Resources, Los Angeles.
- 1984-7 "The Parasite Lily," performed at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles as part of the performance festival:  
 1986-7 "Public Spirit: Live Art L.A.: California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA; University of California, San Diego, CA; The Kitchen, Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York, NY; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
- 1981 "The Monitor and the Merrimac," Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY.  
 "Meditation on a Can of Vernors," Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles.
- 1982 "Confusion," University of California, San Diego, CA; Film in the Cities, Minneapolis, MN.
- 1987 "The Artist in Television," Telesatellite Conference held at the University of California, Los Angeles, CA: live interactive performance with Michael Smith, Los Angeles/New York.
- 1983 "Confusion," Pilot 1 Theater, Los Angeles.
- OTHER "Monkey Island," Beyond Baroque Literary/Arts Center, Venice, CA.  
 "X-C," Beyond Baroque Literary/Arts Center, Venice, CA, collaboration with Tony Oursler.
- 1974-9 Reading, Hall Walls, Buffalo, NY.
- 1984 "The Sublime," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.
- 1986 "Godzilla on the Beach," Beyond Baroque Literary/Arts Center, Venice, CA, collaboration with Bruce and Norman Yonemoto.
- 1984-8 Reading, Anti Club, Los Angeles.
- 1985 Reading, The Permanent Contemporary Gallery, Los Angeles.  
 Reading, Artists Space, New York, NY.  
 "Monkey Island Part Two," Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery Theater, part of "Artificial Intelligence in the Art, #1 Brainworks," a symposium in conjunction with the exhibition "Los Angeles Summer/Styrian Autumn," Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery,



## PERFORMANCES con't

- Los Angeles and Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria (catalogue).  
1986 "The Peristaltic Airwaves," live radio performance, KPFK, Los Angeles,  
co-produced by High Performance Magazine & KPFK.  
"Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile," Artists Space,  
New York, NY.  
1989 "Theory, Garbage, Stuffed Animals, Christ," Beyond Baroque,  
Venice, CA.  
"Pansy Metal/Clovered Hoof," (in collaboration with Anita Pace)  
sponsored by Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles.

## TEACHING

- 1981-3 Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, MN.  
1983-5 University of California, Los Angeles.  
1984-7 Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles.  
1986-7 California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA.  
1987- Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA.

## AWARDS

- 1984 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant.  
1985 National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artists Fellowship Grant.  
1986 Artists Space Interarts Grant.  
1987 Awards in the Visual Arts Award.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

- 1974-9 Various Noise Bands.  
1979 Member of orchestra in Los Angeles performance of Herman Nitsch's  
Orgies Mysteries Theater.  
1986 Member of advisory committee, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary  
Art Journal.  
1984-8 Member of Board of Directors and performance & exhibition  
committees, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions.  
Actor in films and video tapes by Tony Conrad, Tony Oursler, Ericka  
Beckman, Bruce & Norman Yonemoto, Paul McCarthy.  
"Theory, Garbage, Stuffed Animals, Christ (Dinner Conversation Overheard at  
a Romantic French Restaurant)," Forehead, Vol. Two, 1989, pp 12-21.



## BY THE ARTIST

- "The Runaway Wheel," Journal, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, March, 1979.
- "The Parasite Lily," High Performance, 11/12, Artist's Chronicle, Fall/Winter, 1980.
- "The Poltergeist," Journal, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Sept., 1980.
- "Monkey Island," Lightworks, Feb., 1981.
- "The Monitor and the Merrimac," High Performance, #14, Artist's Chronicle, Summer, 1981.
- "Conserve Energy," Los Angeles Herald Examiner: California Living Magazine, in conjunction with "A Meeting of Media" by Christopher Knight, Nov. 22, 1981.
- "Meditation on a Can of Vernors," High Performance, 17/18, Artists' Chronicle, Spring/Summer, 1982.
- "Monkey Island," Cave Canem, Artist's Anthology, Sept., 1982.
- "The Spot Syndrome," New Observations, 1984, with Ericka Beckman.
- "Slow Boat to Lesbos," Barney Magazine, 1984.
- "Ajax," Journal, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Spring, 1984.
- Cover Drawing, Magazine, Beyond Baroque Foundation, Spring, 1984.
- Spectacle, #1, 1984, drawing.
- "Urban Gothic," Spectacle, #3, 1985.
- "Excerpts From: Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile," Journal, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Fall, 1985.
- The Paris Review, Fall, 1985, drawing.
- "Mike Talks to Mike About Mike," High Performance, #33, 1986, interview with Michael Smith.
- Flanagan, Bob. Slave Sonnets*, book of poetry, Cold Calm Press, 1986, cover design and drawing by Mike Kelley.
- WhiteWalls, #13, Spring, 1986, statement and drawing.
- Plato's Cave. Rothko's Chapel. Lincoln's Profile, New City Editions in association with Artists Space, 1986.
- "Excerpts From: Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile," File, #27, Spring, 1987.
- "The Peristaltic Airwaves & Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile," High Performance Audio, audio cassette, 1987.
- "Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile," Tellus, #18, audio cassette magazine, 1988.
- "Artist Page," Artpaper, Feb., 1988.
- Zyzyyva, Spring, 1988, drawings.
- "Three Projects: Statement," WhiteWalls, #20, Fall, 1988.
- "Foul Perfection: Thoughts on Caricature," Artforum, Jan., 1989.
- "Mekanik Destruktiw Kommandoh: Survival Research Laboratories and Popular Spectacle," Parkett, # 22, 1989.
- "Theory, Garbage, Stuffed Animals, Christ (Dinner Conversation Overheard at a Romantic French Restaurant)," Forehead, Vol. Two, 1989, pp 12-21.



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- Armstrong, Richard.* Sound, catalogue essay, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, July, 1979.
- Armstrong, Richard.* Review, Artforum, Nov., 1979.
- Beal, Suzy.* "Mike Kelley's Trip," Pro-Fun Magazine, April, 1980.
- Hertz, Richard.* "L.A.'s Flesh Art," High Performance, Feb., 1981.
- McMullen, Dan.* "Interview with Mike Kelley," High Performance, Feb., 1980.
- Ballatore, Sandy.* "High Points, Low Points, No Points," Images & Issues, Feb., 1981.
- Singerman, Howard.* "The Artist as Adolescent," Real Life, Summer, 1981.
- Rickey, Carrie.* "Art Attack," Art in America, May, 1981.
- Pincus, Robert L.* Review, Los Angeles Times, June 16, 1981.
- Wortz, Melinda.* "Time, Space and the Freeway," Art News, Sept., 1981.
- Plous, Phyllis.* Contemporary Drawings, catalogue essay, University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1981.
- Knight, Christopher.* "A Meeting of Media," Los Angeles Herald Examiner, California Living Magazine, Nov. 22, 1981.
- Winer, Helene.* Exhibition, catalogue essay, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA, 1981.
- Singerman, Howard.* Review, Artforum, December 1981.
- Owens, Craig.* "Back to the Studio," Art in America, January 1982.
- Hawler, David.* "Stage Series Off to Confusing Start," St. Paul Dispatch, April 15, 1982.
- Eisenman, Stephan F.* Review, Arts Magazine, November 1982.
- Princenthal, Nancy.* "Gallery Installations: Performance in Place," Alive Magazine, Nov.-Dec., 1982.
- Pincus, Robert L.* "The Art, Analysis of 'Monkey Island'," Los Angeles Times, March 4, 1983.
- Gardner, Colin.* "Out of the Frog," Art Week, March 12, 1983.
- Pincus, Robert L.* Review, Los Angeles Times, March 25, 1983.
- Norklun, Kathi.* "Pick of the Week," L.A. Weekly, March 25-31, 1983.
- Knight, Christopher.* "Mike Kelley Turns Confusion into Art," Los Angeles Herald Examiner, March 27, 1983.
- Pincus, Robert L.* "Michael Kelley at Beyond Baroque and Rosamund Felsen," Art in America, September 1983.
- Martin, Tim.* Headhunters, catalogue essay, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, October 1983.
- Singerman, Howard.* "Monkey Island," The Fifth Biennale of Sydney. Private Symbol: Social Metaphor, catalogue essay, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, 1984.



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- Pate, Pattie. "Eight Idiosyncrasies," Artweek, March 3, 1984.
- Pincus, Robert L. "Sublime Antics Create a Deflating Experience," Los Angeles Times, March 17, 1984.
- Gardner, Colin. "From the Ridiculous to the Sublime," Los Angeles Reader, March 23, 1984.
- Muchnic, Suzanne. Review, Los Angeles Times, March 30, 1984.
- Lasarow, Bill. "Michael Kelley," Artscene, April 1984.
- Knight, Christopher. "Artist Mike Kelley Redefines 'Sublime'," Los Angeles Herald Examiner, April 8, 1984.
- Norklun, Kathi. "Performance Archeology," Artweek, April 14, 1984.
- Drohojowska, Hunter. "Mike Kelley at the Rosamund Felsen Gallery," L.A. Weekly, April 20-26, 1984.
- Handy, Ellen. Review, Arts Magazine, April 1984.
- Norklun, Kathi. "The Flow of Belief: Can Art Replace Wrong-Headed Thinking?," High Performance, #26, 1984.
- Bankowsky, Jack. "Summer Show at Metro Pictures," East Village Eye, September 1984.
- Adams, Brooks. Review, Art in America, October 1984.
- Martin, Tim & Weissman, Benjamin. "Assignment Outback," The First Biennial 1984: Los Angeles Today, catalogue essay, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA, 1984.
- Wilson, William. "It's Neo-Ex Trick or Treat at Newport," Los Angeles Times, Calendar, Oct. 14, 1984.
- Drohojowska, Hunter. "First Newport Biennial, 1984: Los Angeles Today," L.A. Weekly, Oct. 26-Nov. 1, 1984.
- Drohojowska, Hunter. "Artists the Critics are Watching," Art News, November 1984.
- Drohojowska, Hunter. "Godzilla Returns in Multimedia Theater," Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Nov. 2, 1984.
- Gardner, Colin. "Newport Harbor Biennial - The Today Show," Los Angeles Reader, Nov. 16, 1984.
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Mr. Peanut

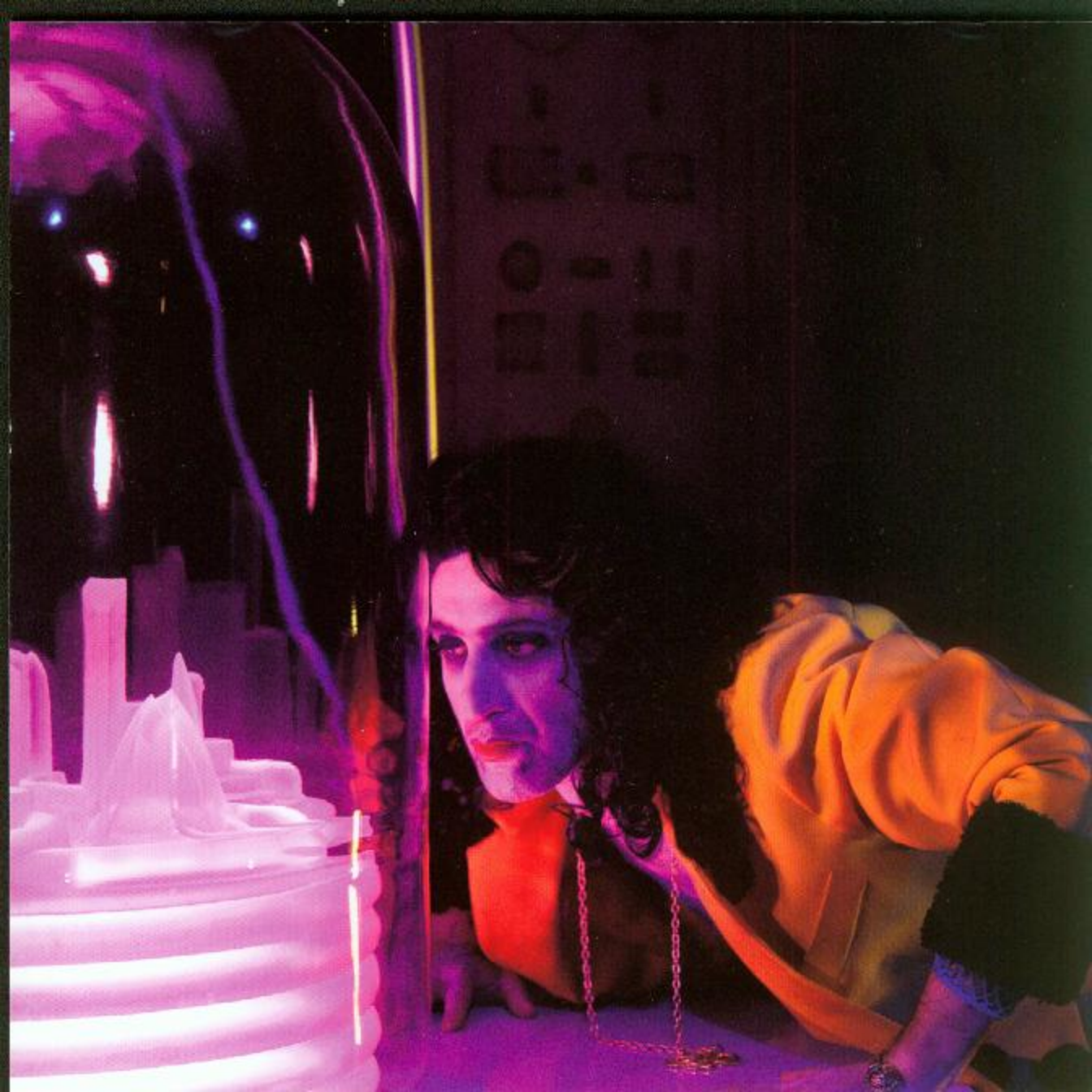






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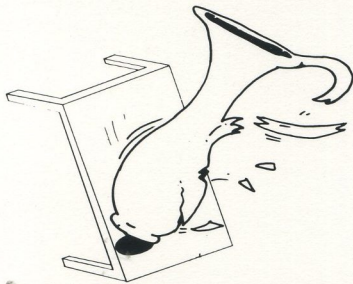
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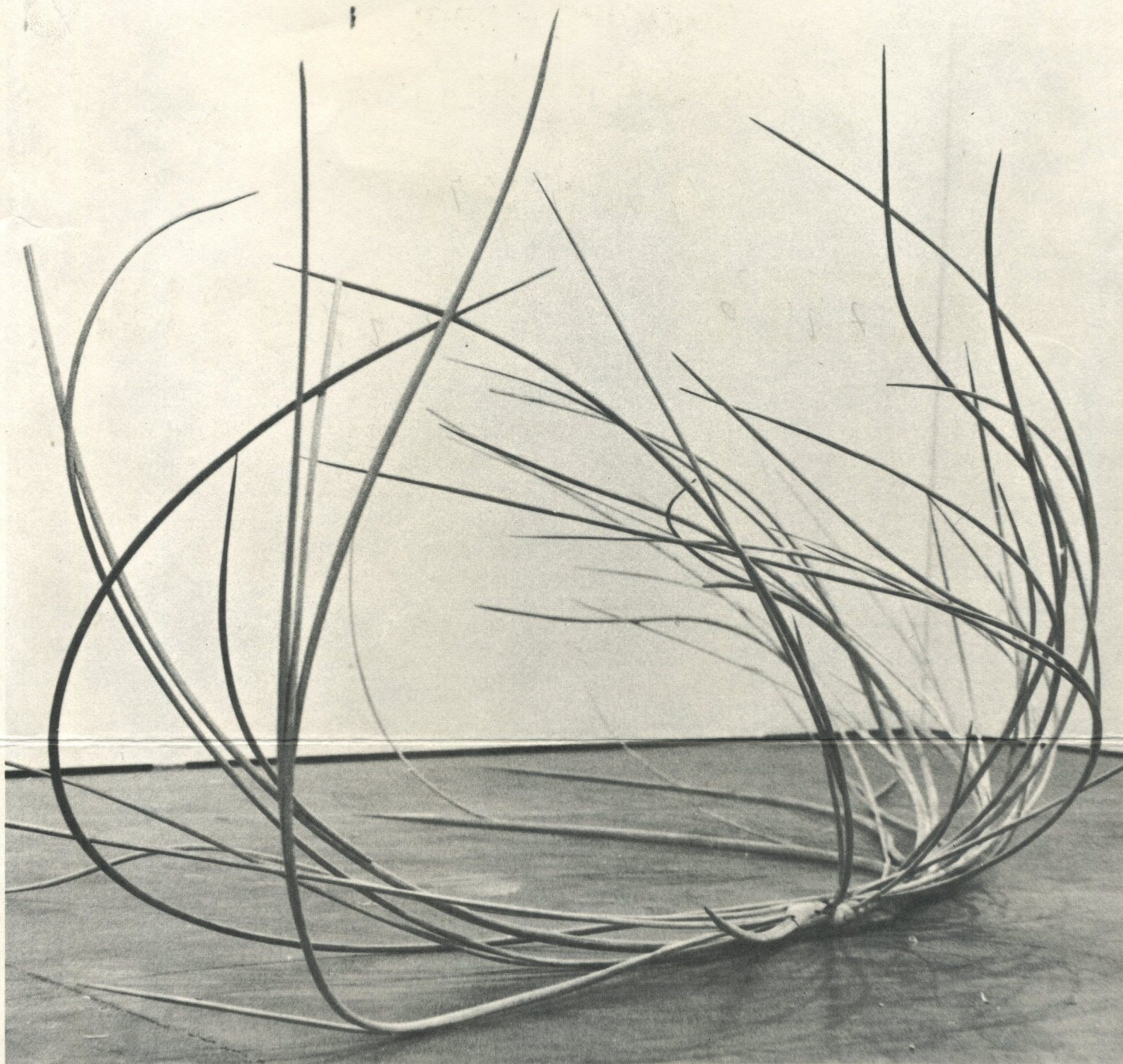
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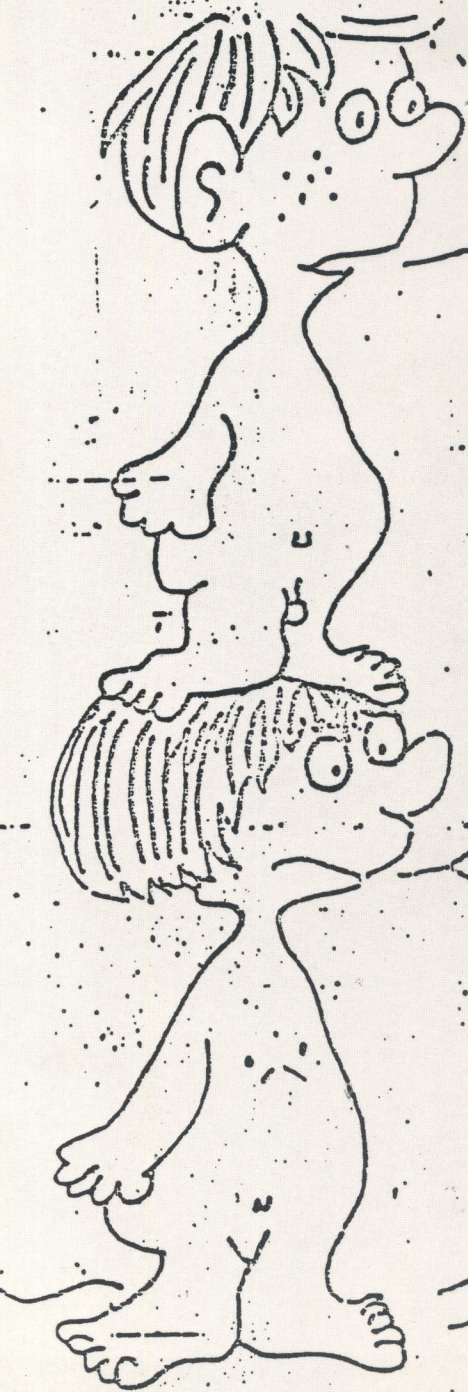






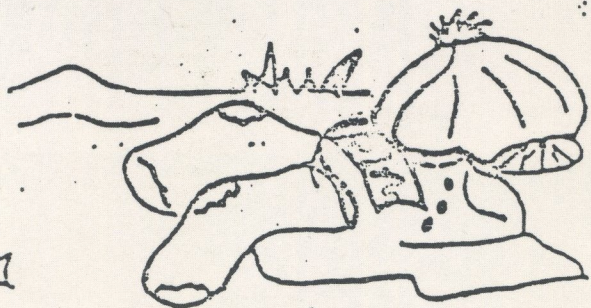






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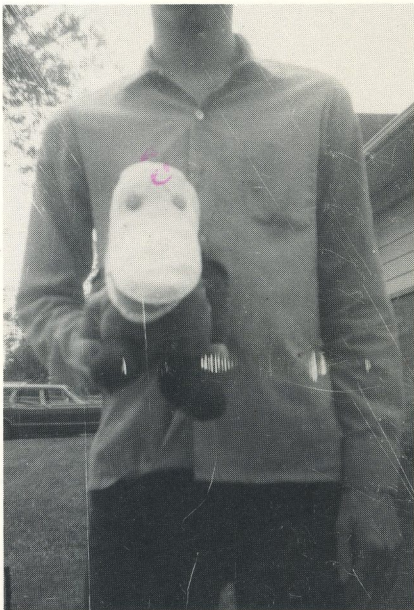
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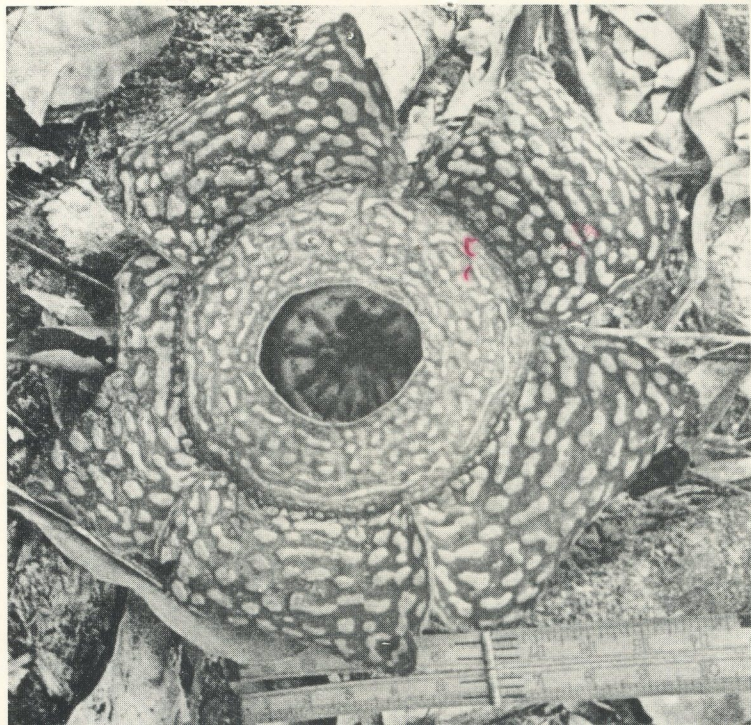


*The pink button eyes on this homemade doll mimic the male vestigial nipples hidden under this 15 year old's shirt.*

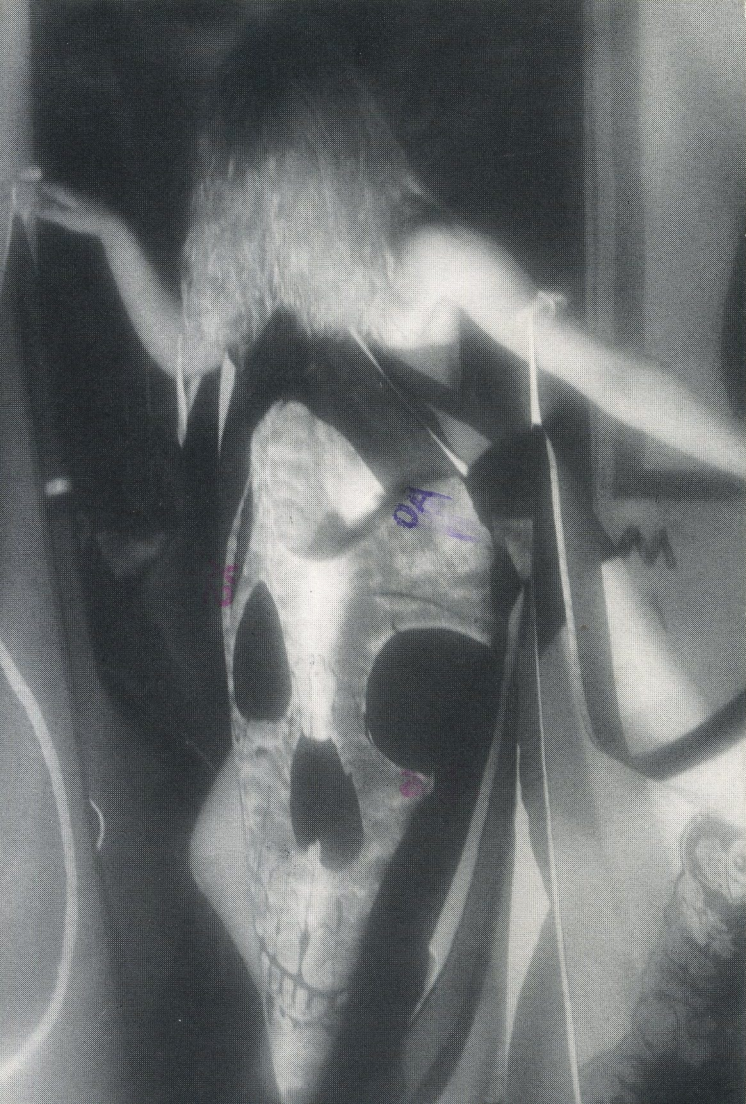
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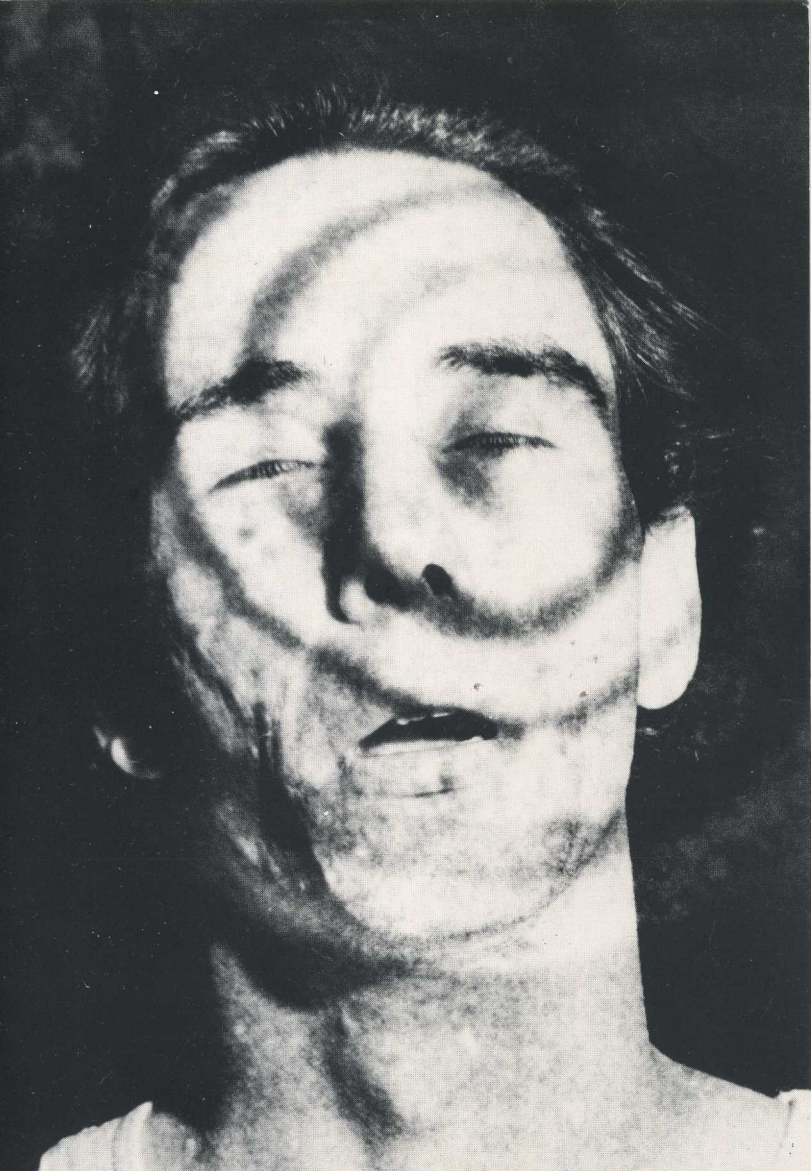
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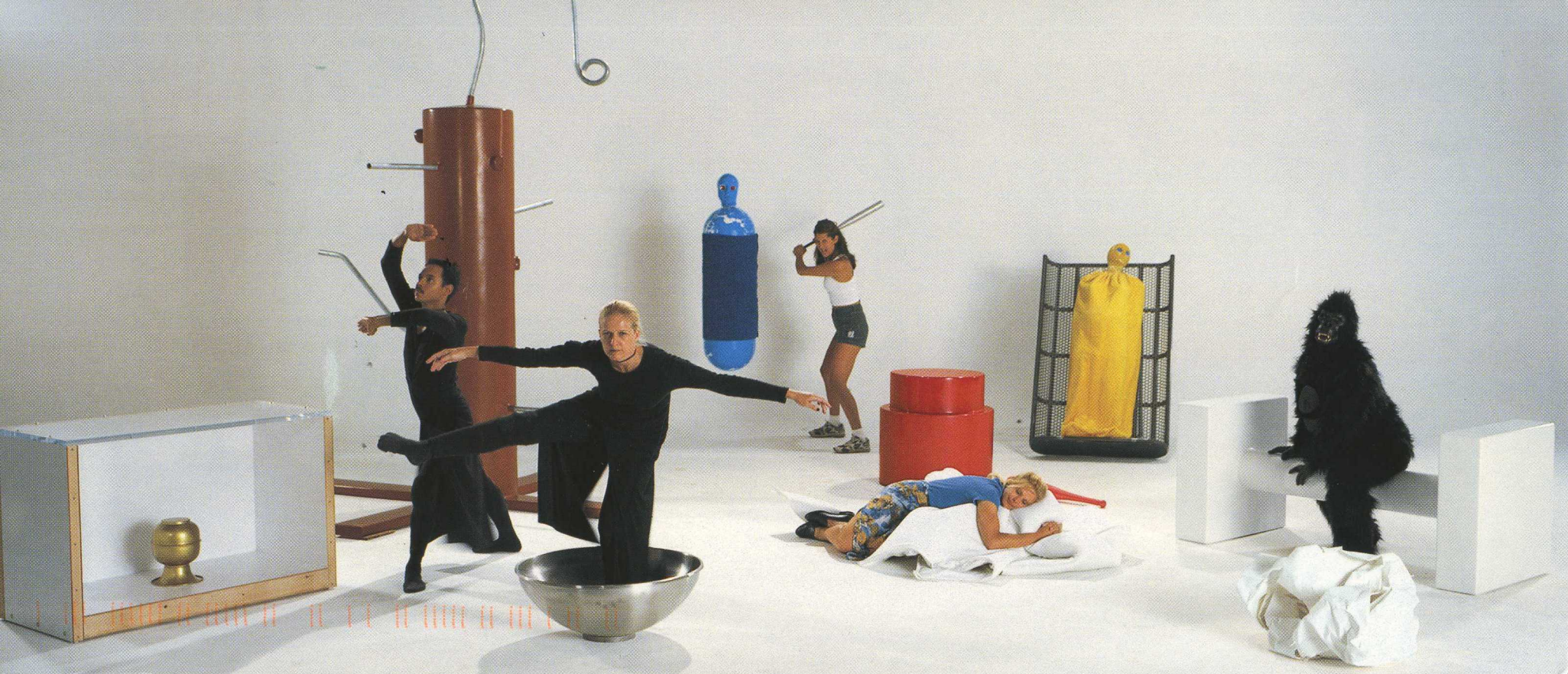
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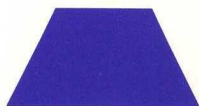
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